

Montgomery County Council  
Council Office Building  
100 Maryland Avenue, 6th Floor  
Rockville, MD 20850

April 8, 2023

Ms. Victoria Fowlis-Porchia  
Montgomery County Resident

Dear Council Persons:

I am providing written testimony related to Montgomery County operating budgets; specifically, advocating for the Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee.

I attended a public meeting in March of 2023. At this meeting, I learned that a funding recommendation of \$25,000 was submitted for consideration. This funding would be used for education, advocacy, responses to and prevention of human trafficking in MoCo.

In my opinion, \$25,000 (little more than \$2,000/month) is wholly and totally insufficient to make meaningful, substantiative, and lasting impact for victims, survivors, and their effected circles of love. Considering direct and wrap around services necessary on an individual and familial level, \$25,000 year is not even a drop in the bucket.

Take for instance three prevention strategies discussed at the March meeting: print advertisement (bus placements), educational posters (displayed in schools, libraries, and community centers), and digital ads (across online channels). \$25,000 would not cover the cost of one campaign.

The other piece of information you should consider when thinking over the amount of funds allocated to the committee is that children are often targeted for online sexual exploitation and forced sex trafficking. Without going into details, you can very well imagine how either of these is a living hell on earth for victims – victims who may or may not live to recover from their trauma.

The Montgomery County Human Trafficking Prevention Committee needs appropriate resources to do very critical, relevant, and timely work. I hope you can find room in the budget to approve at minimum the requested \$25,000 (while doing a deeper dive into the pluses and minuses to find much more). I don't want any person (and certainly no child) trafficked in any county – especially not in my county.

Respectfully (and with concern to protect the vulnerable against trafficking in MoCo),

Ms. Victoria Fowlis-Porchia